UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8
1595 Wynkoop Street
Denver, CO 80202-1129
Phone 800-227-8917
www.epa.gov/region8

JAN 13 2017

Ref: 8WP-SDB

Sydnee Dickson
Superintendent of Public Instruction
Utah State Office of Education
250 East 500 South
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

Re: Reducing Lead in Drinking Water - Resources for Schools

Dear Superintendent Dickson:

The mission of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is to protect public health and the environment and one of our highest priorities is protecting the health of children where they live, learn and play. Providing safe drinking water at schools and educational facilities is a priority that I am sure we share. As the EPA Region 8 Assistant Regional Administrator for the Office of Water Protection, I am asking you to join me in taking action to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water in schools.

There is no safe level of lead exposure for children. Researchers have found that children can have adverse health effects when exposed to even the lowest levels of lead, so it is critical to prevent exposure. Infants, young children and pregnant women are at greatest risk. Health effects can include damage to the brain and kidneys, reduced IQ and other behavioral and neurological impairments. The effects of lead have been linked to reduced performance in schools. Ensuring lead-free drinking water in schools helps not only the at-risk child but the entire school community.

Lead primarily enters drinking water when the lead in plumbing materials is released into the water in the distribution system, especially if the water is corrosive and in contact with the plumbing materials for extended periods of time. The most common problems are with: lead pipes, lead service lines, brass or chrome-plated brass faucets, lead cooling chambers in chilled drinking water dispensers, and fixtures with lead solder from which significant amounts of lead can enter into the water, especially hot water. Buildings built before 1988 are more likely to have lead pipes or lead solder.

In addition to drinking water, children can be exposed to lead from paint, dust, soil, air, food, toys, and even candy. The EPA estimates that drinking water can contribute up to 20 percent of a person's total exposure to lead.

Unless a school is regulated as a public water supply under the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Act, the school is not required to test drinking water and report the results to the state. However, we strongly encourage schools that are not regulated water systems to take advantage of the EPA's voluntary program that guides school districts through the process of sampling for lead, communicating the results to parents, teachers and staff, and remediating any lead exceedances in a timely manner. The EPA has a

helpful program called 3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools and school districts have used it successfully to address many locations with lead in drinking water for the past ten years. The 3Ts fact sheet for public water suppliers is enclosed in this letter. The complete 3Ts Technical Guidance is provided as a website link as well. 3Ts stands for Training, Testing and Telling, and the guidance is accompanied by an online toolkit that helps with all aspects of the program. The guidance covers critical details such as developing a plumbing profile for your facility, water sampling procedures, short term and permanent remedies if lead is found, and techniques for disseminating public information and effective communication strategies.

We appreciate your desire to protect the health of children and young people of Utah and we hope you find this information helpful. We recommend that schools coordinate with their public water systems prior to taking on these activities and prior to sampling as they may have helpful information. If you have other questions or need additional information regarding the efforts to reduce lead in drinking water in schools in Utah, please contact Patti Fauver at the Utah Department of Environmental Quality Division of Drinking Water at (801) 536-4196 or pfauver@utah.gov. For general questions about reducing environmental contaminants in your schools, please contact the EPA Region 8 Children's Environmental Health and Schools Coordinator, Kim Bartels at (303) 312-6346 or bartels.kim@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Darcy O'Connor
Assistant Regional Administrator
Office of Water Protection

Enclosures:
3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water: Fact Sheet for Public Water Suppliers

Website Links to Helpful Documents:
1. Frequently Asked Questions – Lead Exposure: The Risks and Remedies
   https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-09/documents/toolkit_leadschools_3ts_training_faqs.pdf
2. 3Ts Technical Guidance for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools
   https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-09/documents/toolkit_leadschools_guide_3ts_leadschools.pdf

cc: Ken Bousfield, P.E., Division Director, Division of Drinking Water, Utah Department of Environmental Quality
Patti Fauver, Rules Enforcement Manager, Division of Drinking Water, Utah Department of Environmental Quality
Mark Jones, Utah Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology
Chris Nelson, Utah Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology
Sam Lefevre, Utah Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology